

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 PM-05 ISO-00 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
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P 032139Z APR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SANA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY
INFO USMTM RIYADH PRIORITY
SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY PRIORITY 0052
DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 085282

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, YE, SA, US

SUBJECT: MILITARY SUPPLY PROGRAM FOR YEMEN: F-5 AIRCRAFT

REFERENCES: (A) USMTM RIYADH MSG DTG 221227Z MAR 78,
(B) SANA 1418, (C) 77 CHUSMTM DHAHRAN, (D) 77 SANA 4475,
(E) DAO 1213302 NOV 77, (F) 77 STATE 250524, (G) 77 STATE
229572

1. REFTELS A AND B HAVE PROVIDED USEFUL POINT OF DEPARTURE
FOR UPDATE ON STATUS OF TRANSFERS OF FOUR F-5B TRAINERS
AND POSSIBLE PURCHASE OF TWELVE F-5E AIRCRAFT FOR YAR.

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2. AMBASSADOR IS CORRECT IN OBSERVATION (REF B) THAT YAR
WILL HAVE TO WAIT AT LEAST TWO YEARS FOR NEW PRODUCTION
MODELS OF F-5ES. THOSE F-5S FORMERLY IN PRODUCTION FOR
ETHIOPIA ARE NOW PROGRAMMED FOR EGYPT AND ARE NO LONGER
AVAILABLE FOR YEMEN.

3. REF A NOTES THAT SAG STILL HAS NOT INDICATED FINAL

DECISION ON PROPOSAL TO TRANSFER FOUR F-5BS. USG HAS COMPLETED CONGRESSIONAL CONSULTATION ON THIS TRANSFER AND IS PREPARED TO MOVE FORWARD, SUBJECT TO RECEIPT OF NON-TRANSFER ASSURANCES FROM YAR, ONCE SAG GIVES GO-AHEAD. ACCORDINGLY, EMBASSY JIDDA, IN COORDINATION WITH USMTM

RIYADH, MAY WISH TO APPROACH SAUDIS ONCE AGAIN TO REMIND SAG THAT WE ARE AWAITING SAG DECISION REGARDING TRANSFER OF FOUR F-5B TRAINERS.

4. WE DO NOT REPEAT NOT WISH TO PRESS SAG ON F-5E QUESTION UNTIL TRANSFER OF F-5BS IS DECIDED. AS ADDRESSEES AWARE, USG DECISION TO AUTHORIZE TRANSFER OF F-5S CARRIED IMPLICATION THAT AT SOME POINT USG WOULD SUPPORT YAR'S ACQUISITION, WITH SAUDI FINANCING, OF A LIMITED NUMBER OF F-5ES. ADDRESSEES SHOULD UNDERSTAND CLEARLY, HOWEVER, THAT NO FORMAL DECISION IN THIS RESPECT HAS YET BEEN TAKEN. IN THIS CONNECTION WE ARE QUOTING FOR YOU A RELEVANT PORTION OF OCTOBER 1977 LETTER FROM DOUGLAS BENNET, JR., ASIS SEC FOR CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS, TO CONGRESSMAN LEE HAMILTON, CHAIRMAN OF HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN RESPONSE TO INQUIRY BY CONGRESSMAN HAMILTON. BEGIN QUOTE: ALTHOUGH NO COMMITMENT HAS YET BEEN MADE, WE RECOGNIZE THAT IMPLICIT IN OUR CONSENT TO THE TRANSFER OF THE F-5B IS EVENTUAL FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION OF THE SALE OF THE F-5E. THE SAUDIS HAVE
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TOLD US THEY PLAN TO FINANCE THE PURCHASE OF 12 F-5E AIRCRAFT FOR THE YAR. THE AIRCRAFT PROPOSED FOR YEMEN WOULD NOT HAVE THE EXTRA CAPABILITIES THE SAUDI F-5E POSSESSES (E.G., MAVERICK OR LGB CAPABILITY). MAINTENANCE, SUPPORT AND FUNDING FOR TRAINING WOULD, AS PRESENTLY PLANNED, BE PROVIDED BY SAUDI ARABIA.

SALE OF THESE AIRCRAFT WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH THE ADMINISTRATION'S ARMS TRANSFER POLICY SINCE NO NEW OR ADVANCED SYSTEMS WOULD BE INTRODUCED INTO THE REGION. END QUOTE.
CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

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